

Congress passes Energy bill

Nearly 80 percent of PMA purchase power funds were restored in the conference agreement on the FY 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, enacted into law on Sept. 30. The \$21.3 billion EWD Act earmarks \$70.7 million for PMA purchase power and wheeling activities.

Appropriated PPW activities of all the PMAs had been removed from the President's FY 2000 Budget Request to Congress last February. Without the appropriations, Western would have had to solicit \$54 million from customers before providing services, significantly reduce the services provided, or modify or terminate commitments in existing long-term power sale and purchase power and wheeling contracts.

Overall, the EWD Act provides \$213.4 million, offset by \$20 million in assumed carryover balances, to Western's Construction, Rehabilitation, Operation

and Maintenance Account. The Act also provides \$1.3 million to the Falcon and Amistad Operating and Maintenance Fund. Except the assumed carryover balances and the PPW program, the Act funds Western's anticipated requirements as requested. Actual carryover balances are expected to be significantly short of the assumed \$20 million available, and the PPW program was funded \$12 million short of FY2000 requirements.

The EWD Appropriations Conference Committee reduced the PPW program because of concerns over Western's prior year balances and uncertainty regarding potential or ongoing contract renegotiations. The Committee, however, stated that it would fully fund Western's PPW costs and directed the Department to reprogram funds if the amount provided is insufficient.

(See BUDGET DETAILS on page 3)